WELCOME!

Online learning module on hate speech
MODULE 3: Counter-action

In this module...
1. Being an ally in the newsroom
2. Framework of actions: what to consider?
3. Reporting and removing
4. Counter-speech
5. Other options
BEING AN ALLY
Advice kit from the Union of Journalists in Finland

Hate campaigns – What you should do

Journalists at work are increasingly the targets of hate speech and orchestrated online abuse. Online harassment is a serious problem for society because its aim is to silence journalists. It also has a marked mental health impact on those affected.

What to do if you’re the target of a hate campaign

- Save all threatening or offensive material.
- Immediately block anyone sending you hate messages who manages to access your phone messaging channels, such as Facebook.
- If you find the messages persist disturbing, ask a colleague to block your social media accounts for you and then report your ordeal.
- Tell your known that you are being targeted. Your employer should be aware if you are being subjected to hate speech.
- Answer any personal phone number and address confidentially (if necessary). You can make an online application to the local police office for a prohibition on disclosure or information for personal safety reasons. You have to have good grounds for non-disclosure and should visit the local police office, as a police office will then make an order if it is given automatically.
- If these harassing messages persist, have the phone calls you received logged and then report them to the police.
- Training in how to handle and report online abuse, such as cookies and spam emails, should be included in training sessions for new employees, and this should be repeated at regular intervals.

For bosses

- Make sure that you understand the severity of the situation. Journalists might feel that they can’t do their job if your people are being bullied.
- Ask what the employees are being asked to do. Make sure they understand the implications of your instructions, and that you are not putting them in a vulnerable situation.
- If there are any concerns within the organization of the union of any problem, you should ask the union’s Helpdesk to arrange for staff training on the issue. Make guidelines for what to do in case of future hate campaigns.
- If necessary, get counselling on personal security and safety for your journalists.
- Carry out a safety assessment in your workplace to determine the risks and establish whose actions are in the best interests of the situation. Should you report the matter to the police?
- It might be necessary to warn an employer to get in touch with the occupational health service, to explain that psychological support is available.
- Many people subject to harassment start to doubt or lose confidence in the face of insults and abuse. Tell your employees that they have done nothing wrong. The abuse is not their fault and must be treated as a serious and damaging threat to their confidence in their job with you and to their career.

For colleagues

- Ask the colleague concerned if he/she needs help. Offer confidentiality and report any harassment to your local management or anyone at your contact in the union.
- If there is something that appears illegal to the colleague, and there is a chance that the colleague will be put in a position where they might be able to report an offense. You can also help with finding this.
- If the colleague concerned is receiving threats or there’s information about their post or social media, report any comments that have been made.
- Extend to colleagues in good standing for a colleague or a friend, they will appreciate it.
- Support your colleague publicly, for instance by writing on your own blog or归属于 others on their social media accounts to show your support to them whenever they notice that a target is exerting pressure on them.
- The Internet is not always shared by others, it’s a place where everyone can express their opinions, and it’s a public space for everyone. Do
Based upon what we learnt in the previous Chapter, once we better understand how individuals and teams react to stress and threats, we can introduce healthy practices in our groups and organisations in order to prevent or respond to any common problems we identify. However, there may be barriers that prevent us from discussing security openly within our organisation such as – to name a few – heavy workloads, fear, concern that our observations will be misconstrued as paranoia, gender issues and power dynamics.

Deliberately developing an atmosphere of trust, scheduling regular check-ins about security, and fostering a healthy culture of interpersonal communication will help to:
WHAT TO CONSIDER
What to consider

1. Time
2. Working alone (freelance) or in a team
3. Impact
When to turn to the police?

When the threat is

- Imminent
- Likely
- Intended

Always save the URL and take a screenshot, otherwise no evidence!
Tip: Do your research in advance

Find out about your local police offices and NGOs as contact points to get in touch with if you receive serious threats. Save these for later so you can take action without delay.
When to turn to the police?

If two or more conditions are met:

• The post clearly calls for taking real-life action
  “Let’s go and burn a refugee camp!”

• The post sets a definite time for action
  “We’ll gather tonight at 7 pm to finally do something about it!”

• The post specifies a location
  “Meeting at Rue Delacroix to finally show them where they belong”
Tip: How to save the exact URL?

Click on the date under the post:
REPORTING TO SOCIAL MEDIA
Reporting and removing

• Advantages
• Disadvantages
• When to use
• How to use
Tip: Hiding or banning?

Hide a comment or ban the person if they repeatedly post hateful materials.

Note that you can only take these actions if you are admin of a page. Check the resources for more details!
COUNTER-SPEECH
Counter-speech

• Advantages
• Disadvantages
• When to use
• How to use
Tip: When to ignore?

If the person has a few followers, don’t amplify their message by responding.
Don’t feed their hate with your attention.
Tip: Comment or private message?

Sometimes private messages can work better as they don’t bring public humiliation and can make people think.

Careful: they don’t work with trolls!
Counter-campaigns

• Advantages
• Disadvantages
• When to use
• How to use
ROADMAP
Conclusion

- No time, low risk: Ignore
- No time, moderate risk: Hide/Ban
- More time, moderate risk: Report/Remove
- High risk, regardless of time:
  - Report to police
  - Counter-campaign